

A most Notable Example of an Ungracious Son

who in pride of his heart denyed his own Father, and how forl is offence, turned
his Meate to loathsome Toads.

To the Tune of, Lord Derby.



In searching famous Chronicles,
It was my chance to read,
A worthy Story strange and true
whereunto I took good heed:
Betwixt a Father and a Son,
this rare Example stands,
Which well may move the hardest hearts
to weep and wring their hands.
A Farmer in the Country liv'd,
whose substance did excell,
He sent therefore his eldest Son,
in Paris for to dwell.
Where he became a Merchant man,
and Traffick great he used,
So that he was exceeding Rich,
till he himself abused:
For having now the world at will,
his mind was fully bent,
To Gaming Wine and Wantonness,
till all his Goods were spent:
Yet through excessive Rournes,
in that was shewed forth,
That he was three times more in Debt,
than all his wealth was worth.
At length his Credit quite was crackt,
and he in Prison cast,
And every man against him then,
did set his wit on fast:
Then he lay lockt in Irons strong,
for ever and for aye,
Unable while his life did last,
his grievous Debt to pay.

And living in this woful case,
his eyes with tears he spent.
The lewdness of his former life,
too late he did repent:
And being void of all relief,
of help and comfort quite,
Unto his Father at the last,
he thus began to write:
Bow down a while your headful ear,
my loving Father dear,
And grant I pray, in gracious sort,
my piteous plaint to hear;
Forgive the foul offences all
of your unworthy Son,
Which through the lewdness of his life,
hath now himself undone:
O my good Father, take remorse
on this my extreme need,
And succour his distressed case,
whose heart for wo doth bleed:
In direful Dungeon here I lye,
my feet in Fetters fast,
Where my most cruel Creditors,
in Prison have me cast.
Let pity therefore pierce your heart,
and mercy move your mind,
And to release my misery,
some shift dear Father find.
Which chiefest cheer is bread full blown,
the boards my sorest bed,
And stinky stones my pillows set
to rest my troubled head.



My Garments all are worn to rags,
my body starves with cold,
And creeping vermine eat my flesh,
most grievous to behold:
Dear Father, come therefore with speed,
and rid me out of this all,
And let me not in Prison dye,
Arise for your help I call:
The good old man no longer had
perus'd this wretched scrawl,
But trickling tears along his cheeks,
most plentifully did rowl:
Alas my Son, my Son, quoth he;
in whom I joy'd most,
Thou shalt not long in Prison lye,
whate'er it may cost.
Two hundred head of well fed Beest,
he changed into Gold,
Four hundred quarters of good Coyn,
for Silver eke he sold:
But all the same could not suffice
this banish'd man to pay,
Till at the last constrained was,
to sell his Land away:
Then was his Son released quite,
his Debt discharged clean,
And he as like and well to lye,
as he before had been:
Then when his loving Father deare,
who for to help his Son,
Had sold his living quite away,
and eke himself undone:
So that he lived poor and bare,
and in such extreme need,
That many times he wanted food,
his hungry Corps to feed.

His Son mean time in wealth did grow,
whose substance now was such,
That sure part in the City then,
few men were found so Rich:
But as his Goods did still increase,
and Riches it did aide,
So more and more his harded heart,
did swell in hateful pride,
It fell out upon a time,
when ten years woe was past.
Unto his Son he did repair,
for some relief at last:
And being come unto his house,
in very poor array,
It chanced so that with his Son,
great store should dine that day:
The poor old man with Hat in hand,
did then the Porter pray,
To shew his Son, that at the Gate
his Father there did stay:
Whereat this proud disdainful wretch,
with rauning speeches said,
That long ago his fathers bones
within the Grave was laid:
What Kinsal then is this? quoth he,
that staineth thus my state,
I charge thee Porter presently,
to dribe him from my Gate.
Which answer tohen the old-man heard,
he was in mind dismay'd,
He wept, he wail'd, and wrung his hands,
and thus at length he said:
O cursed wretch and most unkind,
and worker of my woe,
Thou Monster of Humane
and eke thy fat

hate I been careful of thy case,
maintaining still thy State,
And dost thou now most doggedly,
enforce me from thy Gate,
And have I wrong'd thy Brethren all,
from thyall to let thee free,
And brought my self to Beggars state,
and all to succour thee!
Woe worth the time that first of all
thy body I espy'd,
Which hath in hardness of thy heart,
thy Fathers face deny'd.
But now behold how God that time,
did shew a wonder great,
Then when his Son and all his Friends
were sitting down to meat:
For when the fairest Pye was cut,
a strange and dreadful case,
Most ugly Toads came crawling out,
and leaped in his face:
Then did this wretch his fault confesse,
and for his father sent,
And for his great ingratitude,
full sore he did repent.
All vertuous Children learn by this,
obedient hearts to shew,
And honour still your Parents dear,
for God commanded so.
And think how he did turn his Meats
to poisonous Toads indeed,
Which did his fathers face deny,
because he stood in need.

F I D I D.

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